



TOP MARINE DISCUSSES THE IMPACT OF MASSIVE BUDGET CUTS ON DEFENSE

In a Nov 14 interview with The Hill, Gen. James Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps warned that additional Pentagon spending cuts would be dangerous and force the military to cut everything from personnel to ammunition to training. Amos's warnings echo those from Defense Secretary Leon Panetta, who in recent days has ramped up his rhetoric against the additional \$600 billion in cuts. "We as a nation don't even know, or have not got a sense of appreciation for, the impact that sequestration's going to have on the Department of Defense," Amos said. "I don't think we understand the magnitude of the



impact that sequestration would have." Some Pentagon officials, lawmakers and analysts say a supercommittee failure would force the military to go below force-reduction plans established last year. But Amos made clear he opposes shrinking the Corps's ranks below the current target of 186,800, which is already a decrease from 202,000. "If sequestration happens, I cannot tell you how big the Marine Corps will be," Amos said. "Any lower than 186,800, and I start getting nervous." That's because a force that size can only do one major war at a time — and without a deep bench back home to continuously rotate into theater. "It means you may be very limited in what you can do elsewhere in the world. It also means if you go do" a major war, "rotating forces will probably be irrelevant," he said.

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HEROES

MARINES RECOGNIZED FOR BRAVERY



On Nov. 10, the Marine Corps awarded Silver Stars to Staff Sgt. Graham Jacobs and Sgt. Charles Cartwright whose combat actions during an intense 2009 battle with Taliban fighters are credited with saving the lives of fellow Marines and Afghan Soldiers. According to a *Marine Corps Times* article, Jacobs and Cartwright were leading Marine Special Operations Company Alpha in Farah province, Afghanistan, when the team came under fire from mortars, rocket-propelled grenades and machine-

gun fire. The two Marines led the joint recon patrol on an assault, coming only 75 meters from their attackers. While under attack, Jacobs and Cartwright coordinated fire and evacuated the wounded. Two months following this firefight, Cartwright died on the battlefield in Afghanistan. The two Silver Star medals were among 10 Bronze Star medals with valor device also presented to members of 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion at Camp Pendleton, Calif.

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WOUNDED WARRIOR REGIMENT CELEBRATES WARRIOR CARE MONTH



For the third consecutive year, the Secretary of the Navy has designated November as Warrior Care Month to recognize the sacrifices and achievements of our wounded, ill and injured service members, their families and those who care for them. "Warrior Care Month is a Navy and Marine Corps-wide effort to increase awareness and understanding of wounded warrior programs and services available to Navy and Marine Corps service members and their families, government and non-government partners, and the American public," Secretary Ray Mabus said. And Marine Corps leadership recognizes the significance of the month. "During November we are highlighting what our outstanding Wounded, Injured Marines and sailors, families and staff do on a regular basis,"

said Col. John L. Mayer, commanding officer, Wounded Warrior Regiment (WWR). "To us, every month is Warrior Care Month and being actively involved in the recovery and transition of our WII service members is our priority." Throughout the month, various events will portray the theme of "Unleashing Unlimited Potential, Healing a Wounded Warrior's Mind, Body and Spirit." "It's critical that when a Marine returns to full duty or transitions to civilian life that he or she is prepared, not just medically, but physically, mentally and emotionally. This includes the well being of a warrior's family. Our mission is to provide the leadership and environment to ensure this happens," said Mayer. For more information about the Wounded Warrior Regiment and to stay updated on Warrior Care Month, go to www.woundedwarriorregiment.org or fan us on Facebook, www.facebook.com/wwr.usmc. For support, call the 24/7 Sergeant Merlin German Call Center at (877) 487-6299.

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NEWS

MARINE AVIATION KEY TO MAJOR OFFENSIVE IN

AFGHANISTAN

As part of Operation Eastern Storm in Afghanistan, 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward) has provided AH-1W Super Cobras, CH-53 heavy-lift helicopters, AV-8B Harrier attack jets, and UH-1Y Huey and AH-1W Super Cobra helicopters in order to execute coalition forces' mission.

The operation is a major offensive just south of the Kajaki Dam, and it is designed to eliminate one of the final insurgent footholds in southwestern Afghanistan. "Our big support for Eastern Storm was

getting [1st Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment and 2nd Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment] into position," said Lt. Col. Robert B. Finneran, 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward)'s future operations officer and a native of Cape Carteret, N.C. "The threat level going into this was unknown." It is a big job with lasting implications, as coalition forces work to secure Afghanistan's Route 611 and ensure peace and economic development in the region. "We've been able to fly and support in any way [the ground combat element has] asked up to this point," Finneran said. "The Wing's flexibility to meet the challenges of the ground combat element has been key. We had a very well-synchronized aviation plan." The eagle-view from the sky has also shown the progress coalition forces have made. "Almost overnight, the valley turned into a string of Marine-controlled outposts," said Capt. Joseph Fry, an AH-1W Super Cobra pilot with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 267, noting that over the summer he witnessed a relatively heavy amount of combat there, but very minimal ground presence.

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See Also: Regional Command Southwest weekly news round-up



MULTI-SERVICE OFFICE TO ADVANCE AIR-SEA BATTLE CONCEPT



In order to support emerging national security requirements, the Department of Defense (DoD) announced the creation of a new



office to integrate air and naval combat capabilities. In the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review, former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates directed the Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps to develop a comprehensive concept to counter emerging anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) challenges. The services collaborated to develop the Air-Sea

Battle (ASB) concept. On Aug. 12, 2011, Navy Adm. Jonathan Greenert, Marine Corps Gen. Joseph Dunford, and Air Force Gen. Philip Breedlove established the Air-Sea Battle Office (ASBO), creating a framework to implement the ASB concept. The ASB concept will guide the services as they work together to maintain a continued U.S. advantage against the global proliferation of advanced military technologies and A2/AD capabilities. Air-Sea Battle will leverage military and technological capabilities that reflect unprecedented Navy, Marine and Air Force collaboration, cooperation, integration, and resource investments.

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FIRST LADY: 100,000 MORE JOBS COMMITTED TO VETS, SPOUSES

First Lady Michelle Obama announced that the International Franchise Association has made a commitment to hire 80,000 veterans and military spouses by 2014, and the Military Spouse Employment Partnership has committed to employing 20,000 military spouses by 2014. In conjunction with the recent commitments, the Veterans Job Bank has launched as an open online resource supported by nearly a dozen technology and job search companies, including Simply Hired, Monster and others, to help veterans and military spouses search job openings from committed employers based on their location and skills. "When we think



about what we're announcing today -- 100,000 new jobs committed and 550,000 searchable jobs online -- those aren't just numbers," Mrs. Obama said. "There are millions of Americans all across this country who are working hard every day to find new ways to honor military families' service. All of this is adding up, and thanks to the IFA and MSEP, they're part of the wave of support forming that stretches across this country." Although the President's initial challenge was for the private sector to hire 100,000 veterans by 2013, the First Lady said the hiring initiatives would not stop even as employers pledge above the president's challenge. "To the veterans and spouses who might not feel these efforts in your own lives just yet, those of you who might be wondering if this wave will ever reach you, I want you to know today that I won't stop, and all of the people joining me here today won't stop," she said. "We will keep working until this wave of support reaches every single veteran and every single military family in this nation."

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COMMANDANT EXPLAINS THE PURPLE HEART AS PART OF OPERATION CARING CLASSROOM



Gen. James F. Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps was featured in the fifth episode of Operation Caring Classroom (OCC). In the episode he teaches children about the history and significance of the Purple Heart Medal. The OCC lessons feature active or former members of the armed forces speaking to children about their background and what Veterans Day means to them. Each year OCC recognizes children from military

families for their service to our country. This national education initiative spans all 50 states, awarding one civilian school per state the distinction of being an OCC school. Throughout the year over 55,000 students across the country create letters, strength chains, and patriotic pictures. These students also participate in a variety of activities such as word searches, history lessons, crossword puzzles and other activities that show them what life is like for military children. Students extend support and hope to their peers, especially those facing the hardships of parental deployments, frequent moves, and loss of a loved one. They also have the opportunity to thank children in military families for serving our country and communities and for taking on extra responsibilities at home while a parent

serves overseas..

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JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE ATTENDS MARINE CORPS BALL



On Nov. 12, Justin Timberlake kept his promise and escorted Cpl. Kelsey De Santis to the Marine Corps Ball in Richmond, Va. Timberlake posted a heartfelt note on his blog recounting the event and thanking all Marines for their selfless service. "To all of you that serve every day for us... Ensuring our freedom, I say: My deepest gratitude to you. I've met so many of my heroes... From Michael Jordan to Michael Jackson. And, nothing makes me feel more honor and pride than when I get to meet one of you. Last night changed my life and I will never

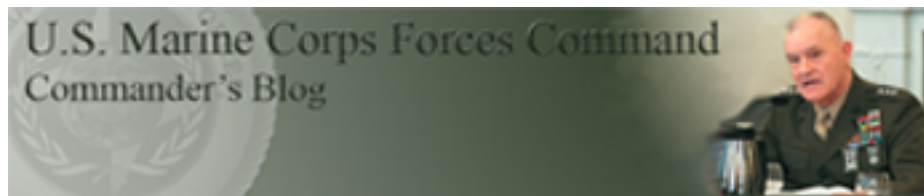
forget it," Timberlake wrote. In a Nov. 15 interview, De Santis told TODAY'S Ann Curry that it was a really good experience to have Timberlake accompanying her. "He had a really big smile on his face, and so did I," De Santis said.

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BLOGS

MARINE FORCES COMMANDER STARTS BLOG WITH AMNESTY BOX, ROE'S

Earlier this month, Dennis J. Hejlik, Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Command, took to the cyber world and stood up his own



blog. "I recently have come to appreciate blogs as a way a leader can share his thoughts while also collecting feedback from a broad group with a wide variety of perspectives. I've been particularly impressed with the United States Fleet Forces Command Blog started by Admiral J.C. Harvey, and my goal here is to pursue a similar course," he said in the introductory post. So far, he has posted on topics such as the Marine Corps birthday and the upcoming Exercise Bold Alligator, but plans to expand in the months ahead. "I plan to use the Marine Corps Forces Command Blog to offer my perspective on a variety of issues - from topics as broad as the future of the Marine Corps, to personal observations on leadership," he said. Additionally, the Commander hopes that the blog will be a tool for way two-way communication and he has opened an "Amnesty Box" on the site for readers to provide their input, as well as commenting on specific posts.

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THANK YOU

LEGION POST LAYS ABANDONED ASHES TO REST



After learning of a Marine's ashes were put up for sale, the American Legion Post 166 of Goose Creek, S.C., worked tirelessly to ensure that the fallen Marine was laid to rest with dignity. The ashes were abandoned in a storage unit and were put up for sale at a flea market. Although the identity of the Marine remains unknown, about 200 people came to a ceremony on Veterans Day, which included an honor guard with rifle volleys and taps. "It's not just him, it's all of us,"

John Lehman of Summerville, a Navy veteran, said through tears. "Nobody knows who he is, what he was, anything about him. It's what he represents." Others agreed about the significance of the event. "This is a comrade, and this could be anybody's son or father," said Mike Spisak of Goose Creek. "This is my way of saying thank you."

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BRATT PARK RENAMED FOR FALLEN MARINE

As a young man, Travis M. Nelson spent many afternoons at Bratt Park in northern Escambia County, Pensacola, Fla. Just last week, the park was renamed the Travis M. Nelson Park. "He is so happy right now to know he has a park in his name," said his mother, Beckie Nelson, smiling through her tears. Hundreds of locals gathered on the park's grass to hear people talk about Nelson and watch the unveiling of a memorial sculpture. "The community is what has gotten us through each day, even people we don't know," Nelson said. "It doesn't make it easier on the heart, but we have pride. We are the proudest because he is our hero." The park was named for the young Marine who was killed in action just months ago, while deployed on his first tour to Afghanistan. "It is not his death that made Travis Nelson a hero, but it was his life," said U.S. Navy Chaplain Jeffrey Bornemann at the ceremony. "His life has brought hope, inspiration and our freedom." In addition to his legacy of the park, his fiancée, Madeline Cates, has decided to join the Marine Corps. "I'm going to finish what he started," she said. "I think [the park is] a great way to remember him," she added. "And you better believe we're going to be up here a lot."



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